

SPIRITUAL

TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

—THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM.

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## The Principles of Nature.

## OLD TESTAMENT INCONSISTENCIES.

BY ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

All True Religion is immutable. I wonder that any one can for a moment imagine the possibility of its overthrow. Is truth a mere circumstance? Do clouds and storms extinguish the sun? Is true religion dependent for its existence upon belief or disbelief—upon forms and organizations?

O ye of little faith! Go by the ocean's side, and behold far away the rock of ages. The storm-king sends his servants to battle. The clouds assemble, thunder answers thunder, from the four corners of heaven the elements rush to one center, and the fierce tempest descends with all the pageantry of contending deities. The ocean groans with the voice of anger, mountainous waves roll forward with a mighty power; but amid all, and above all, stands yon noble Rock, erect, unmoved, and unchanged. Ten thousand times ten thousand storms may rage beneath, around, above—ages upon ages may roll away—empires may rise and kingdoms fall—millions of human beings may come and go—the terrestrial ball may pursue its pathway about the parent orb; yet, unshaken and immovably stands the True Religion—firm as the universe—beautiful as Deity.

You who fear or hope that religion will be extinguished, need wisdom: go, study the constitution of the world. Contemplate the rock in the ocean, when no storms or contention can disturb. Gaze at the sun, whose life-giving glories no clouds or tempests can ever diminish!

But where shall we find this religion which changes not? Ah! here is the question. And when we become acquainted with its locality, how shall we know that it is the "true religion?" What is the rock? The answer may be found in the New Testament: "The kingdom of Heaven is within you." That is to say, the law and the spirit—the way, truth, and life—are natural to the soul of man. Yea, religion has a rock in the soul. In its elements and essences, in its inextinguishable instincts and unfolding faculties, which are true prophets and true apostles—in these find we the true religion. If this position be not tenable—if the mind of man is not the basis of true religion—then is God a respecter of persons, partial in his dealings, and the New Testament answer must be a fallacy.

We hear much lamentation concerning the fate of the Bible. In most minds, religion and the book are one and inseparable. "They must stand or fall together!" But I can not think so. Can not a man exist without a shadow? Are symbols essential to the existence of thought? Surely the letter and the spirit are not indissoluble! If they are, then will we lament and deplore any examination of the Bible.

The idea that the Bible is the infallible word of God—that it is the Rock of Ages, that in it is only to be found the true religion—is fatal to itself. There is a prevailing superstition, generated by commentators, that the Old and New Testaments are intrinsically and extrinsically harmonious. When the whole volume is correctly understood (they assert), the beauty and stupendous unity of the system is clear as the sun in the heavens. But this assumption is made by persons who have the presumption to suppose that they have seen the harmonies of the Scriptures.

Let us reflect on this. The assumption is that the Bible is the word of God—a supernaturally-originated and a supernaturally-inspired volume—given to man for his enlightenment and salvation. And yet, according to the Protestant system of private judgment and liberty of conscience, each mind, though uninspired and in no manner supernaturally endowed, is left to read and find out the meaning of God in this world. While one man finds the Bible infallible, another finds it fallible—one discovers it to be harmonious, another inharmonious; and so comes contention and criticism. I can not but admire, in bold contrast, the beautiful logical consistency of the Roman Catholic Church. It never was guilty of trusting religion to the people—never committed a deed so fatal to private despotism as that of permitting an unsupernatural faculty to read and interpret a supernatural book! The reading of the book is fatal to the idea of its supernatural origin, also to its so-called infallible principles of religion and truth. When will Protestants fully realize their present situation?

Protestants must certainly see, sooner or later, that the door which Martin Luther opened can never be shut against the onward march of the free-born soul! The infallibility of the Pope is but a continuation of the Protestant idea of the infallibility of Moses, John, or Paul. If you admit the supposition of the possibility of Isaiah's infallible inspiration, you have then granted the premises upon which Pope-and-Priest infallibility is predicated. If God saw proper ever to inspire supernaturally a Jew or a dweller of Palestine, how do you know but he also seen it proper to supernaturally inspire a Cardinal or a Pope? If God has ever inspired a paper and pasteboard book, how do you know but that he now inspires the Roman Catholic Church? If you admit the one, there is

no escape from the other. As believers in the supernatural inspiration of the Bible writers, you are, according to every principle of logical deduction, constrained to admit the possibility of all which the Catholic Church claims for itself.

But Luther, I say, in protesting against the authority of the Pope, opened a door for the final rejection of the book-authority upon which the first is based. Pío Nino is as likely to be a chosen vessel of God now, as Paul was in the beginning of the Christian era. The superiority of the character of one man over that of another is of no account where supernatural transactions are involved in the premises. Therefore, I affirm that the Protestant idea of an infallible Bible writer is the firm foundation of Popish despotism, and of all the absurdities of the Catholic institution.

Persuade me that the paper and pasteboard Bible is the infallible word of God, and I will at once accept the brick-and-mortar church as the recipient and emporium of his divine favors. Persuade me that Moses, Joshua, Solomon, David, Isaiah, Matthew, John, and Paul were in very truth the chosen vessels or penmen of the Supreme Being, and I promise you that I will at once accept, and would demonstrate conclusively from your principles, that the unbroken chain of cardinals and popes, extending from Peter the First to the kingdom of heaven, are as certainly the attorneys of Jehovah, and as being indispensable to all temporal and spiritual government and civilization. If Moses, and Joshua, and Paul are to be my masters in these sacred principles which bind my soul to its Author, then why may I not accept Pío Nino as my master and father in spiritual things? You, who are Protestant believers in Bible infallibility, can not deny me this logical inference. But you reply that I should not allow a mere man to rule over my conscience—that it is yielding my liberty to the jurisdiction of despots, and placing my soul in the keeping of mere priests and teachers of religion. Verily; but what are you Protestants doing, when you take Moses and Paul for your masters? Surely these were mere men also—manifesting all the attributes and characteristics of humankind—and so, why should they, any more than Clement or Alexander, be my masters in the affairs of my soul?

Dr. Orestes A. Brownson, editor of a Catholic Quarterly Review, a man of much learning and independence, is a very consistent and faithful exponent of religious aims and tendencies. He has traveled from Egypt, through the wilderness of skepticism, into the promised land of belief, which he is now preparing to rid of all Protestants by logical weapons. Protestants advocate the supreme authority of the Bible, but tolerate to each man the liberty of reading its pages to suit himself. Brownson, on the other hand, advocates the absolute supremacy of the Pope, and denies to man any rights. God only has rights. Man has duties. The Church is God's representative, and society is under its exclusive dominion. The Church grants privileges to governments, and governments owe allegiance and obedience to the Church. Now, this is nothing less than theological or Protestant despotism, logically and legitimately carried into practice. But how much better than this is the Popery or clerical dogmas of Protestants? The Bible is God's representative or word, they affirm. The individual has no rights, but duties; mind is not the master, but the subject of its teachings. The Pope regards all as heretics who reject his authority! The Protestant denounces all as infidels who reject the authority of Moses! The idea is simply this: Protestantism is but a child of Catholicism. By a law of hereditary descent, the parent transmits its character to the offspring; but, as evidence of a law of progress, the child is not so wicked and degraded as its venerable progenitor.

Catholics make no more opposition to Free Schools, whereby education may be extended to all people, than do Protestants to the free discussion of the Bible, whereby truth may be elicited and transmitted to posterity. In regard to Free Schools, we quote from Dr. Brownson:

"Our enemies rely upon Godless schools—State education—as a means of checking the progress of Catholicity. We must admit they have laid their plans with infernal skill. The result will not meet their anticipations, however! The attention of the Catholic world has been directed to this subject by those whom God has sent to rule over us, and a struggle, which will end in victory for the Church, has begun between Catholicity and the State, to see who shall have the child."

So speaks O. A. Brownson concerning Free Schools. But observe, when you read Protestant notices of this Bible Convention, that, by substituting the word "convention" for schools, with one or two other alterations, you will see the same spirit manifested toward us. Indeed, it is hard to determine which is the worst enemy of freedom and humanity. The party that would make the Church our master, or those who would give to us the Bible as a sovereign, with only feeble reason to comprehend and harmonize its multifarious inconsistencies. Reason is feeble only after having been for a lifetime subject to bondage. Protestant denunciation of Reason is paralleled by Catholic defamation of Protestantism: the opinions of the two parties are equally valueless.

Father Gavazzi comes to our country, and lifts up his eloquent voice against the despotisms and abominations of the

Romish Church. But he is in bondage, and can do nothing more than delight a Protestant audience. He can not do the "work of destruction," because he stands intrenched in Protestantism, which deserves the same fate. He cries out against the ignorance, the idolatry, the slavery of Catholicity; but against Protestant ignorance, idolatry, and slavery his voice can not be raised, because the receivers of his messages are composed of the latter party. He affirms that Catholicism is too narrow for his soul. With a soul so expanded beyond the circumscribed confines of Pius the Ninth, I wonder how he can breathe the confined air of Protestant bigotry and superstition! I can see no difference between the infallibility of the Pope and the infallibility of Paul. But we have political freedom under Protestantism, which the Church of Rome denies to its subjects. Very true; but how came this blessing? It was first established through the instrumentality of the greatest despot, Henry VIII., that ever ruled over mankind. But in our blessed land let us raise the hymn of gratitude to Thomas Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, and many others, who were the sworn friends of liberty and of free principles. Let it be remembered that the political and other blessings of America are not owing to any exertions on the part of priests, nor to any logical application of the doctrine of Bible infallibility upon which Protestantism rests.

In a recent letter to the clergy of all denominations I affirmed that the Battle of the Evidences of Christianity is to be fought on the broad field of scientific and positive principles. The old metaphysical ground of idealistic impossibilities—such as what and where is God? what and where is spirit? what and where is heaven? are now scarcely admitted into the arena. But the mountain torrent of civilization has dashed along regardless of religious and mythical obstructions, and with each succeeding wave there comes to our land a new discovery in some department of creation. The progress of scientific discovery, in one brilliant day, is carrying the war into the very heart of biblical authority. The positive and unavoidable deductions of astronomy, of ethnology, of archaeology, of hierology, of physiology, stand in startling opposition to nearly all the assumptions of popular theology pertaining to Bible infallibility. I will presently bring this fact more distinctly before the reader.

The scientific education of the Protestant clergy is so utterly neglected, while preparing for the ministry, that they usually enter the field of labor without the proper implements of spiritual husbandry. Consequently, having read the standard works on theology, and one or two books in reply to "infidel objections," the young minister is apt to entertain several inflated notions respecting the perfection of biblical wisdom. Sometimes we hear them preach thus: "The Bible has stood the test of ages. No closeness of inspection, keenness of investigation, or strictures of criticism has been able to defeat its claims. Moses' account of creation is simple and sublime. The volume of destiny is suddenly thrown open; time is proclaimed; creation arises; and a new race of intelligence appears on the scene. Nothing can shake the plain narrative of Moses. The Bible is perfect in all its parts—full of excellences—and, taken as a whole, is without contradiction or inconsistency."

Most congregations accept this as a tenable doctrine. Children grow up with this conviction, and so the Protestant notion of Bible infallibility is kept alive and before the people. But now is the time to investigate these positions, because never before was the world so full of scientific discovery.

In the light of the nineteenth century, the Mosaic account is notoriously unsound and fallible. We have a vast number of cogent reasons for rejecting the divine authority of Genesis. Let me ask your attention to a few of them.

First. "In the beginning, God created heaven and earth." There are several philosophical objections to the truth of this statement. It is found that matter, though changeable, is indestructible—not a particle can be put out of existence. Chemists have tried the experiment in vain. Hence Nature declares that matter is eternal substance, and could not have sprung from nothing. The creation of matter implies the bringing of something into existence from nothing, which proposition no healthy mind can for a moment entertain. Here is one reason why we object to the Mosaic account.

Second. "And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." Aside from the supernatural operation here implied, there are very strong scientific objections to this statement. But first let us notice the internal contradiction. You will observe that there were three days and three nights before God put "lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night." Before the creation of a "greater light to rule the night," how, let me ask, could there have been "evenings and mornings?" But this objection is trivial in comparison to the following:

It is asserted that "Darkness was upon the face of the deep"—that God said, "Let there be light, and there was light"—implying the absence at first of all light from the universe. This is in direct antagonism to all the positive discoveries of the age. "The celebrated speculation of La Place,

now very generally received as probable by astronomers, concerning the origin of the earth and planets, participates essentially in the strictly inductive character of modern theory. The speculation is, that the atmosphere of the sun originally extended to the present limits of the solar system; from which, by the process of cooling, it has contracted to its present dimensions. There is in La Place's theory," says Mill, in his system of Logic, "nothing hypothetical; it is an example of legitimate reasoning from a present effect to a past cause, according to the known laws of that cause." Science demonstrates that first, heat, light, and electricity were in existence before the earth was formed; but Genesis makes the earth to exist previous to light! Nature and the Old Testament are here at war with each other. Which shall we believe?

Third. The Mosaic account is unsound, because it teaches that the heavens and earth, and all that in them is, were made all perfect at once. "The Almighty voice is addressed to chaos. Confusion hears it, and wild uproar stands ruled. The waters subside; the verdant landscape is seen; songs burst from every grove; and stars, bright, rolling, and silent, beaming, are hurled forth from the Almighty hand." And Genesis also affirms that man was more pure, perfect, and wise—more in unity with heaven and its Author—than the race is to day!

In absolute refutation of all this, how explicit are the positive declarations of universal nature! The first types of vegetation, the first indications of animal life, the first things performed or invented by mankind, were rough, crude, incomplete, and in every respect inferior to after developments. All things—trees, fish, birds, animals—grow from incompleteness to perfection, from rudeness to refinement, from the imperfect to the beautiful. And must all the declarations of Nature be overruled by the authority of a book whose origin is Eastern and mythical!

Fourth. We object to Genesis because of another internal contradiction. The book asserts that "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good." If God saw every thing and pronounced every thing good, let me ask: Who made the wicked serpent that tempted Eve? If this animal was more subtle than any beast of the field—having the devil in him—who created them? Who was it that made and pronounced every thing good?

Fifth. Genesis can not be a true report of creation, because instead of coinciding with the revelations of universal nature, which prove the gradual formation of the globe by a cooling-off process, the progressive introduction or development of plants and animals on its surface by a natural method of growth, the account teaches the particular, the sudden, the miraculous, the incomprehensible creation of every thing in six literal days.

Sixth. Genesis can not be a true report, because it contradicts the positive declarations of Astronomy. According to our system of chronological calculation, Moses makes the heavens and the earth about six thousand years old. But astronomy declares that light requires three hundred thousand years to travel from one of the fixed stars to our earth! This one fact alone proves that those orbs have been in existence three hundred thousand years! But you answer, "that all things are possible with God." Paul denies this (Heb. vi. 18), and affirms by two immutable things it is possible for God to lie. In this I believe with the apostle; for I can not think that the Spirit of this beautiful universe is capable of an inconsistency!

Seventh. Genesis can not be a true report, because it belittles our ideas of God. The extent and grandeur of the universe, the resplendent objects and countless assemblages of which people the empire of being, cleanse and purify the mind of all contracted notions of the Deity and his governments. But Moses destroys all consistent ideas of an omnipresent energizing Spirit, by describing him as a man making the universe in six days, and, being fatigued, as resting on the seventh; and not only so, but as "walking in the garden in the cool of the day"—as any common Egyptian god would be supposed to do—with hands and feet, and a limited power of vision. "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of an omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient Spirit. And an omniscient being, unable to find the guilty pair among the trees of the garden, began to call unto Adam: 'Where art thou?' And after the creation was getting along altogether too fast and wickedly for the Creator, then, again, like an Egyptian god (Gen. vi. 6), 'it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.' Now all this is vastly too human and insignificant to be applied to the omniscient Spirit of this Universe. Every man, Christian or Pagan, when in his right mind, totally rejects the narrow and cramping idea of God advocated in the book of Genesis, and elsewhere. 'A universe,' says Rev. Thomas Dick, 'vast, boundless, and incomprehensible, is just such as we ought naturally to expect from a Being who is infinite, eternal, and omnipresent; whose power is uncontrollable, whose wisdom is unsearchable, and whose goodness is boundless and diffusive. All his plans and operations must be, like himself, vast, boundless, and inconceivable by mortals.' Now I sub-

mit that this idea is not applicable to the creation!

Eighth. The most advanced thinkers among of the Mosaic theory, have, as I am fully aware of necessity, by abandoning the idea of six literal tions, and accepting, instead, the geological epochs, or "ages." The most learned of the writers say, that the term "evening and the morning" accepted figuratively to mean the "ending a indefinite stages of creative development." I can be no objection to putting a little new wine if therefore the wine will but be more accept of habit. But here comes a trouble of inco are now to receive the six days as figurat regard the seventh day, on which the Lord r days signify "ages," what does the seventh are we inconsistently and hypocritically each common week as the day hallowe Deity, while, in our theory, we are comp six days as uncertain, immeasurable, indefi tive development? Here, again, the pos deductions of a philosophical theology st onism to the accounts of Moses.

There are before my mind eighteen othe cogent, going to invalidate the divine au correctness of the very first chapters in But we will let them pass, and ask ante those chapters.

It is a singular and significant fact, th in Egyptian history alluding to the exis Moses. The Egyptians were a cultu chain of mountains, their wonderful py hind the period set to Noah's flood, wri tioning such a marvelous catastrophe ethnological discoveries carry us into eight thousand years from the present ur tion nation, with signs of the existence tion previously, two thousand years old the creation of man. The hierologist u records, and the latter of geologic scie

And, what is still more remarkable and simple orphic sayings and verses Minor, and Greece, are, in conception ology, identical with the first part of And when the hieroglyphic charact and Africa shall have been perfectly found, I think, that the cosmologic an of Moses were in existence nearly is such a people as Jews had begun to however, will be tardily introduced, and antiquarian knows that he is wri Protestant and sectarian readers.

Richard, in his work on Egyptia the idea that Moses was inspired t He says: "The five books of Moses evidence, not of one sole, connected, they bear evidence of being a compu The genealogical tables and family that are found embodied in the Pen ance of documents copied from writin no trait which might lead us to ascri dictates of immediate revelation."

Genesis, which contain an accoun two thousand years older than the J mids and obelisks of Egypt, and th the land of Tartary, will, when fi reveal the Oriental parentage of the Perhaps you think me too far The celebrated Mr. Gliddon, in hi "Ancient Egypt," says, "There i that other coteremporary nations\* di lier times, similar records; nor is coteremporary nations should no events, and handed down, as far as nals of those events on which the four hundred years, is strictly silent the "Wars of Jehovah," and the have been found, which our Bibl came these omissions!

Intelligent Christians acknowle quoted mode of biblical interpre positive deductions of all the sci age. Regarded as a record of f history can not be sustained. He into spiritual or symbolic interpret world, the garden of Eden, the te and tower of Babel, are received tions—as types of spiritual exp equally to nations and individuals. for his historic and scientific kno mentary on the Jewish Testame

\* That is, nations existing at

counts can be understood and supported only in a figurative or spiritual sense—implying that a literal view of them, as entertained by New England clergy and laity, is at once absurd, untenable, and unsupportable by Nature, Reason, Intuition, and history. It would consume our time to present Swedenborg's science of correspondences—but enough is added to show what reasonable men and scholars think of the Mosaic account. Swedenborg affirms that the early scriptures were written in correspondential language, of which the hieroglyphic scriptures of earth are vestiges. Every figure symbolized some particular idea. Thus, as some writer remarks, a beetle did not stand for a beetle only, but also for the world; an asp corresponded to royalty; and eagle, to courage; the lion, to strength; a ram's head, to intellect; a duck, to a doctor of medicine; and a goose, to a doctor of divinity.

The idea that the Bible is a connected whole—without contradiction or inconsistency—is a superattribution of the Protestant priesthood. The intelligent and accomplished Jesuit entertains no such untenable opinion. He depends upon the external despotisms of organization, and upon the attractions of a well-regulated and venerable ecclesiasticism, for the success of his design upon the religious liberties of humanity. Protestantism and Catholicism deserve the same condemnation. They differ, not in the character of their notions respecting infallibility, but in degree only.

The Catholic idea of Pope and Church infallibility is simply an elongation or extension of the Protestant idea of Old and New Testament infallibility.

The two parties are, in theory and theology, equally foes to the interests and liberties of the world. And I have shown, I think, that one should not be allowed to impose any more restrictions on the soul of man than the other—that is to say, neither is good enough to merit the support of intelligent, benevolent, free, and conscientious minds.

Have I said anything against true religion? Because I reject the infallibility of Paul and the Pope—the infallibility of a book and a church—am I therefore irreligious? The Old Testament is a statement of the ideas and events of the Patriarchal Age—the era of Force: the New Testament is a statement of the ideas and events of the Transitional Age—the era of Love: the two, combined, formed King James' Bible. But let me ask—why should the statement of one age remain the statement of all ages?

Can religion be based on a book? This idea has obtained among Christians; hence they imagine the heathen to be benighted, and without religion! Is God a respecter of persons or nations? Far from it. True religion, like true anatomy and physiology, is older than books! There must be a religion older than the Bible; a God better than it declares.

Did Newton learn astronomy in books? Did Jesus learn intuition and love of all human kind from the prophets? Is there no inexhaustible fountain from whose flowing rivulets each soul may freely drink? Does the same God not always inspire and nourish? What would you think of a man who does all his farming, plowing, and planting, by reading books on Egyptian and Roman agriculture? The land before his eyes would meanwhile grow thorns and unwholesome vegetation. What, then, do you think of Christians who bid their followers to read and believe King James' version of the Testaments, to the end that they may be religious and acceptable unto God? He who would not "be wise above what is written" (in any book), is a miserable pagan, engaged in blindly loving his ideals, and needs philosophic culture. For is there not a law, a science, a principle of justice and equity in man's mental economy, superior to all writing? Let every son and daughter of nature be developed to the fullness of the structure of the perfect man—let society develop the kingdom of Justice and Freedom within each soul and family—then you will see a manifestation of TRUE RELIGION.

#### LETTER ABOUT SPIRITS.

PARTRIDGE, June 23, 1853.

MR. PARTRIDGE:

The so-called Spiritual Manifestations commenced in this place last September, and have been progressing ever since. We have seen, tipping, painting, and rapping mediums, and clairvoyants magnetized by Spirits. We have a very strong medium in our village, whose presence the Spirits often rap so loud that you can hear them four or five rods. One of the most prominent Spirits calls himself Benjamin Franklin; but for the sake of brevity he allows them to call him "Uncle Ben." He often causes the table to follow the medium, and beats time to music to the satisfaction of the critical skeptic. If a gentleman requests him to pound on the table as hard as he does, he invariably complies; and so they pound till skinned knuckles and swollen fingers wear the gent to despair. If any one wishes to take a trip across the room, they have but to take hold of the table, and if requested it takes them back again.

I will not tax your time with particulars, but leave it to the imagination to guess the result of these things. The proud sneered and the pious groaned, but Uncle Ben forced the curl from the pedant lip and the scowl from the bigot's brow, with but few exceptions. Those few, with the evidence of their eyes, and with the raps still ringing in their ears, turned sneeringly away, saying that the medium kicked, or quoting a false Scripture advice to "go not after them." One priest, with more combative than intellect, who was riding his circuit wearing weeds of sophistry for the entanglement of human reason, commenced a protracted meeting, and he would continue it till he drove the rappings out of the place. The friends of Spiritualism asked Uncle Ben if the priest would make any converts? "No, no," was the reply. The priest continued his ranting for five weeks, perpetually hurling forth his shafts of ridicule and sarcasm, but no convert was made! Undisturbed, Uncle Ben raps on, and has convinced his hundreds. It is worthy of remark that our most intelligent citizen gave the subject an investigation and said, "Here is a fact, although contrary to my preconceived opinion and conflicting with the philosophy of the age. Let us try to solve the problem, believing it to be a clue to some mighty principle."

As a friend to truth I feel in duty bound to mention one peculiarity in these proceedings. Some of the young people were somewhat rude and reckless; or at any rate, the priest said they had not the fear of God before their eyes. Many of these became mediums, treated the subject like eagles, and investigated like philosophers, free from prejudice or excitement. I verily believe it is not in the power of Christendom to produce the moralizing effect it has had in this place. "The cry of 'humbug!'" "collusion," "electricity," etc., arising from the lips of priest and knave, are, like the idle wind, not heeded. Prejudice and superstition stand rebuked in the presence of this new teacher. The Spiritual car now rolls on triumphant, propelled by the immutable law of nature. The genius of freedom stands as conductor. His countenance beams with anticipation; his eyes brighten with hope; justice inspires his tongue, while he proclaims that nature shall be vindicated and man redeemed! "Satan free!" come out, come all; the black and white, bond and free, noble and ignoble, the poor, the afflicted, the priest and potentate and their dupes. The invitation is world-wide and God-proclaimed; the platform is as wide as his mercies and as broad as his justice. Its course is not like the juggernaut crushing its devotees beneath its ponderous wheels. The way-side is not strewn with the bones of its victims, but it is strewn with cast-off creeds and time-battered fatalism. • • • Methinks I prospectively hear the shouts of the exulting throng mingled with the praise and gratitude of the progressed spheres, as the lost soul is landed at the depot of everlasting bliss.

BELLA RUTTER.

## SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTAN, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1853.

Persons who send communications intended for the press should, if they desire to preserve them, invariably retain a copy, so as to preclude the necessity for our returning them in case they are not published. Among the mass of rejected papers, they are extremely liable to be lost, and we can not be responsible for the safe keeping of communications which, in our judgment, are of no value.

#### SECTARIAN OPPOSITION TO SPIRITUALISM.

We have received lately several copies of a "Discourse upon the Ancient and Modern Arts of Divination, delivered in the First Presbyterian Church of Rochester, on Sabbath Evening, March 23, 1853," which seems to deserve a passing notice. It deserves nothing more, for it is as strange a compound of ignorance, arrogance, and disingenuousness, as was ever uttered in the pulpit, and can excite in every well-informed mind no other emotion than that of profound pity for the man who can thus like the serpent draw its poison from the same plant from which the bee may extract its honey. Of itself, it deserves but little consideration; but as a fair specimen of the intolerance with which bigotry is arming itself for the conflict, it may not be improper to notice it.

Its text is as follows:

"Deuteronomy xviii. 9-12. When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee."

From that text it denounces Spiritual intercourse in such terms as these:

"You, dear friends, have committed a great and deadly sin, you have rebelled against the God who made you, with his express prohibitions before your eyes; you have despised his own revelations of himself and of spiritual things, and have sought to penetrate into his secrets; you are involved in the horrid crime of having led into insanity more than five hundred human beings, whom these abominations have already shut up in Lunatic Asylums; and you are stained with the blood of all the souls who have been and shall yet be slain by this delusion."

But it carefully conceals the fact, that in the book from which this text is taken, is written these commands, which are equally binding: "And thine eye shall not pity, but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house if any man fall from thence." "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together." "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord: even to his tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord forever." "And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcasses."

Now, we might pause here to ask the preacher, who denounces against us one part of the Mosaic Law, whether he is observant of the other parts? Whether, when he invokes against us one injunction of that law, he intends to demand of us an observance of the other?

The answer to these questions might be too troublesome, and we therefore pass to the remark, that the sermon seizes upon a few of the commands given by Moses to the Jews, which are equally condemnatory of the intercourse between man and his Maker, through Christ and his apostles, and of that great command on which, he said, hung all the law and the prophets.

The great argument, however, is the insanity which Spiritual intercourse produces. Without stopping to inquire where the "discourse" gets the alleged fact, several times repeated, that five hundred people have been made insane by Spiritual intercourse,\* it is enough to say, that preacher knows full well what every one else knows, that for every one made insane by this cause, ten have been made insane by Christian religious excitements. And the voracious child would know that if this tendency to insanity were any argument against Spiritualism, it is an argument ten times as strong against Christianity.

It is, however, lamentably true, that for many years and ages religious excitements have been a prolific source of mental derangement. The reason why it is so, is a problem of no ordinary interest. And it requires no profound investigation to be able to know that it has its origin in such false teachings as those of this Discourse, which, instead of looking upon the next stage of existence with the eye of reason, regard it only through the dark obscurity of superstition, and which, instead of going to nature's laws for a solution, seek for only in the dogmas which men subject to moral blindness have interwoven with the pure teachings of the gospel.

The preacher is indeed truthful in saying that the most fruitful of all immediate causes of insanity is the undue excitement of the imagination, that awful power which is the image in man of the creative energy of God, and which calleth forth things which he not as though they were; but he is so short-sighted to see that the remedy is in the proper education of that faculty, and removing from it the idea too freely taught by such blind instructors, that Spiritual intercourse is ghostly, and therefore fearful, and not that it is in obedience to a general law which is as easily understood as that which governs the steam-engine or the magnetic telegraph.

The whole error consists in the fact which the preacher himself is obliged to concede, and to us, though it seems not to him, comes the inquiry, Whence comes this and what is the remedy?

He says:

"What other fact could so strikingly set forth that decline which has been going on in the children of the Puritans since they banished religious

\* It was reported some months since by the New York Herald, and copied by other papers, that there were twenty persons on Blackwell's Island who had been made insane by spiritualism. As the locality designated was not far from this city, our colleague went to the place with a view to ascertain the fact, and learned from the resident physician of the Island, that there had never been but one person there who was reported to be insane from that cause, and that he remained but a very short time, his mind equanimity being soon restored. We, however, found among the victims, whose names are at no hope, a young lady who was converted at a revival meeting and baptized through the ice some two or three years ago, and who has never had the use of her mind since her introduction into the Church. From this fact constitutes a valid reason why persons should not join the Church!

If all the reports respecting the insanity mentioned by "the rappings" have been so much exaggerated as to be foregoing, the whole number, according to our estimation, will be reduced from five hundred to twenty-five, which is probably much nearer the truth.—Ed.

instruction from their public schools! For, fifty years ago, all our education was based upon the Scriptures. In every school in the land, whether public or private, was given a course of instruction in the doctrines and truths and histories of the Bible. But we have changed all that; and for thirty years, at least, our great and all-molding systems of education have known little or nothing of Scripture doctrine. The first generation thus trained is now upon the stage, and these are some of the first fruits of that education, which, in order to be universal by the votes of Pagans, Jews, Mormons, Infidels, and others, must needs be without the Scriptures and without God. And if this system be not soon and fundamentally changed, and the Word of God be not made the matter of instruction and the principle of education, this decline will not stop here; but we shall soon have divination by the entrails of sheep, and oxen, and swine, by the flight and the voices of birds, and by the barking of dogs, and every other bearded and soul-destroying superstition which once held sway over the heathen mind. No extent or thoroughness of merely scientific culture—save us from being rebaptized with pagan superstition. Nothing but religious truth, Biblical instruction, can be at all adequate to the great objects of popular and universal education. Without this, science itself soon becomes incomprehensible and impossible."

True, true, most true. For more than fifty years, aye, for nearly one thousand eight hundred years have these blind teachers been departing from the doctrines of the gospel, and substituting for them such glosses of men as that now before us. And so lamentable have been the effects, that even in this free country, professing to be Christian, out of a population of more than 23,000,000 not 5,000,000 profess to belong to any religious denomination. What is to affect the remaining 18,000,000? Is it the teaching of such doctrines as these now before us? For hundreds of years it has been tried, and orthodox teachers, like this "pastor," in great numbers are now compelled to admit a complete failure. Shall we try the experiment any longer? Let this man himself answer.

Man must have some open communication with the Spiritual world; without it he can not rest; it is a necessity of his nature, of his most inward and Spiritual being, which must be satisfied."

True again; most true. But this craving of the immortal soul is not to be satisfied by such chips and porridge as this Discourse. It must have something more. And thanks be to God! it comes to us—comes, as it did of yore, with healing on its wings, and the gates of hell, in or out of the pulpit, can not stay it.

J. W. E.

#### PHYSICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL.

In the researches of Baron Von Reichenbach concerning the economy of imponderable agents, the results of which are embodied in his curious work, "Dynamics of Magnetism," etc., one fact was developed which should be known to all who value sound and refreshing sleep. It was discovered in the following apparently accidental manner: A Mr. Schuh, a scientific gentleman who assisted Reichenbach in some of his experiments, had the singular habit of changing his position in bed in the after part of every night, placing his head where his feet had previously been. He found that after this change his sleep was invariably more refreshing than it had been on the previous part of the night; and that whenever he neglected it, he invariably felt dull and stupid during the whole of the subsequent day. He mentioned this singular habit to Reichenbach, when the latter inquired as to the position of his bed in respect to the points of the compass, and was told that it stood with the head to the south and the foot to the north. The philosopher then advised his friend to assume a position opposite to that to which he had been accustomed, on going to bed—that is, with his head to the north and his feet to the south. He did so, and never after found the change of position necessary, his sleep being sound and refreshing during the whole night.

This fact induced Reichenbach to make further inquiries in respect to the effects upon other persons of position in sleep; when he found that cataleptics and nervously or oddly sensitive persons were invariably affected most favorably by the northern position of the head. One peculiarly sensitive young lady was found to have chosen that position instinctively, and was with the greatest difficulty persuaded to temporarily alter it, even for the purpose of experiment; and when she did accede to the solicitations of the experimenter, she found the newly-assumed positions unendurable—that with the head toward the west being the worst. Other persons he found to be affected unpleasantly, and sometimes even to fainting, by sitting in church with the face toward the west; and several of these could not walk in a westerly direction for any length of time without experiencing similar results.

The cause of these phenomena Reichenbach found in the odic principle accompanying the magnetism of the earth, with its polarity as affecting the polarity of the human system. The writer of this, from some three years' experience, as well as from the intrinsic nature of the case, has no doubt that the conclusions to which the Austrian professor arrived in this department of his inquiries, are well founded, and that all persons, and the more nervously or magnetically sensitive in particular, would derive essential benefit from always sleeping with the head to the north. When that position is impracticable, the next best position is with the head to the east.

#### DIGEST OF CORRESPONDENCE.

G. L., of Lockport, Ill., writes us the following account of his own personal experience as a medium, and of the general aspect of the Spiritual unfolding in his vicinity:

During the past winter, quite a number of the friends of the Harmonical Philosophy devoted considerable time to the investigation of the new manifestations. There were in the early part a very good writing, also a rapping, and two very good speaking mediums, one of the latter being a male and the other a female. We could communicate, at times, very freely by the raps; but, as a general thing, the Spirits were more willing to converse by speaking or writing, as they could tell us so much more by these means than by the sounds. The communications that were received, whether directed to a single person or to the circle, were always of a pure and elevated character; and many a tear of joy was shed at these unmistakable evidences of the presence of departed loved ones. I had several communications from my mother, given through the lady medium. These, to me, were sufficient evidence of my mother's presence. In about two months from the commencement of my investigations, I began to feel the influence of Spiritual magnetism. Soon after I felt myself under complete control. For the first two or three times I could not speak. One evening, after that, when the male medium was under influence, he drew a plate, which the following represents, and, upon being asked what it represented, he answered that I would explain it. At the next circle I began to speak fluently. I was also influenced to magnetize those in the circle who did not feel well. This, to me, was an entirely new process of healing, so far as I was concerned in its practical application, as before I had for some years recommended the water-treatment. But as in many cases I found that Spiritual magnetism did much good, I very reasonably came to the conclusion that even the heaven-directed water-cure was not the alpha and the omega of the healing art. When under influence to explain the meaning of the plate before spoken of, I found that I was controlled by Benjamin Franklin, and that the plate is intended to represent the outlines of a new science, named by Franklin the Science of Human Nature, commencing with the first dawn of fetal existence, and proceeding through the various changes of progressive life up to the perfection of development, as manifested in the seventh sphere.

Our correspondent furnishes us with a sketch of the diagram

above referred to, which we are compelled to omit. In a subsequent part of his letter he proceeds to speak of a series of predictions given by the Spirits respecting his movements, then future, and which were fulfilled in a remarkable manner. The essential facts in these statements were, that as he was one morning talking with his wife respecting the inconvenient tenement into which they had been obliged to move, as the only one vacant at the time, he was suddenly controlled by the Spirits to say, that within about three weeks they would move into the house of a certain neighbor, who would leave the house by that time. This prediction was thought to be extremely improbable, as it was supposed that that neighbor was permanently settled. Shortly after, however, the neighbor actually did move; but before our correspondent was informed of the intended vacation of his premises, they were let to another party. It was again extremely improbable that this latter party would give up the lease of the house; but the Spirits constantly insisted that they would, which, in fact, they actually did, without solicitation from any quarter, and our correspondent and his family moved into the house within three weeks from the day on which the first prediction of the Spirits was given. The prophecy was thus fulfilled in its general and particulars, against all human probabilities, and the proof of its Spiritual origin was thus highly satisfactory.

Mr. D. M. Miner, of Oriskany Falls, in a business letter, incidentally writes that he has for the last sixteen months spent much time in diagnosing and prescribing for disease by clairvoyant power. He states that he has been enabled to use medical terms, and to master other technicalities of the practice, although he has never had the benefit of a medical education. He relates two cases, accompanying the same with documentary testimony, in which he had correctly described the diseases of persons, total strangers to him, who were in Buffalo at the time, while he was at home at Oriskany Falls—and states, that if Professor Mattison, Anderson, or the learned Faraday will explain how that is done on any theory which they have manifested an inclination to adopt, he will become their disciple.

A. H. D., of C., informs us that he has written a work, by invisible aid, of about 400 pages, on the order of Nature and the harmony of its laws, with natural and prophetic revelation. As the work treats upon subjects of great importance, he wishes to compare its positions and conclusions with the results of modern physical science, before he decides upon laying it before the world; and, with this end in view, he inquires what is the best work on geological science? It is hard to say which is the best work written upon a science which has received very able treatment at the hands of many different authors. The larger work of Mr. Lyell ("Principles of Geology"), however, is probably more elaborate upon the subject than any other work extant, though our correspondent would find the information he desires in the works of Hake, well, Buckland, Phillips, Mantell, or in almost any other general treatise on the same theme. But we know of no better synopsis of the combined results obtained by geologists than Hitchcock's "Elementary Geology," an octavo volume, the expense of which would probably not be over \$1 25. If our correspondent desires *multum in parvo*, we may venture to commend this work to his attention before all others.

#### REMARKABLE DISCERNMENT.

We learn, from a paragraph in last Saturday's Times, that at a meeting convened at Providence, R. I., on the day previous, for the purpose of taking some action respecting the recent collision on the Worcester Railroad, the Preamble to the resolutions—which was drafted after the stereotyped form, thus: "Whereas, in the providence of God," etc., was so amended as to read on this wise: "Whereas, by the gross mismanagement of those having charge of the Providence and Worcester Railroad," It is said that Dr. Wayland, who was presiding at the time, left the chair, pleading an engagement as the cause, and that a number of other persons retired from the meeting.

Pious people have generally charged their greatest sins to the Devil, while they have as frequently ascribed the consequences of their own carelessness to the Divine Providence. Thus they manage to slip their heads out with as much ease as President Wayland vacated the chair on the occasion referred to. We think that the amendment to the Preamble indicates an intelligent consciousness of human responsibility, without which there can be no reform among men. Those who voted for the amendment certainly evinced a higher respect for the Divine character, and a deeper sense of human wrong, than those who still inclined to follow "the old ways," in falsely and foolishly charging their sins to the account of Providence.

THE TELEGRAPH.—We desire to inform several recent subscribers, and all persons who may have it in contemplation to order our paper, that No. 11 of the current volume is exhausted. We can still furnish complete files, with this single exception. However, as we now stereotype, in a suitable form for the library, all the more important articles in the TELEGRAPH, we can furnish its contents for the first quarter, from May to August, including the articles in No. 11, in the form of a substantial volume of nearly 500 pages, bound in muslin, for the low price of seventy-five cents. At this rate, the TELEGRAPH PAPER will be furnished for one year, in four handsome muslin-bound volumes, so that those who shall hereafter become interested in the subjects of which it treats, may obtain the library edition for THREE DOLLARS.

BRITTAN AND RICHMOND'S DISCUSSION is now published in book form, making a handsome octavo of nearly four hundred pages, printed on fine paper, and well bound. This volume contains the entire correspondence, and, doubtless, presents a larger number of facts and reasons, in illustration of ancient and modern Spiritualism, than any single volume yet published. Further than this it would not become us to speak of its merits. As the work presents both sides of the question, which is now engaging the attention of the civilized world, it is confidently expected that it will find numerous readers, and especially that those who oppose the Spiritual ideas, and desire to be fortified at all points, will make themselves familiar with the numerous facts which Dr. Richmond has furnished in this volume.

JOSUE EDWARDS' BOOK.—There is already a great interest awakened respecting the work by Judge Edmunds and Dr. Dexter, which we have now in press. The interest is wide-spread, and orders are rapidly coming in, which we shall supply in the order in which they are received. The work will probably be ready for delivery on or about the 20th of September.

Those who become interested in the Spiritual Philosophy should not neglect to examine the three volumes given through Rev. Charles Hammond as medium. The books referred to are entitled "Light from the 'Spirit-world,'" "The Pilgrimage of Thomas Paine," and the "Philosophy of the Spirit-world."

## Correspondence of the Telegraph.

We respectfully give place to the following letter, from a gentleman of various literary attainments and acknowledged reputation. The warm admirer of Mr. Greeley, but is accustomed to judge even him with discrimination.—Ed.

HORACE GREELEY AND SPIRITUALISM.

MEASRS. PARTRIDGE & BRITTAN:

Dear Sirs—I have several times been on the point of dressing your widely circulated journal, the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, in relation to what I must call the peculiar Horace Greeley, from time to time, on the subject of Spiritualism. Having been for many years a subscriber to your paper, the Tribune, and a pretty constant reader of it, I am not a little surprised at his very compound truth, what not only myself, but thousands within the circle, consider a question of profound importance. I mean the question whether or not, there is any true remarkable revelations now being made, purporting to come from the world of Spirits, or any verity in the marvellous physical manifestations reported on every hand too, by witnesses whose respectability is unquestioned, or had learned, to regard Mr. Greeley honest, and entirely above hasty conclusions, or to his public declarations. Right glad have I been to hear him so, for his position enables him, if he has the will of the public, to do a vast deal of good. Certain had my confidence, partly from the fact that I found and partly generally acceptable to my convictions, and partly because I thought I saw in him an unusual position to get at the truth and defend the right, and in all places. But, in some respects I have pointed, particularly in Mr. Greeley's treatment of a question. When it was first made a public question, coincident with the public appearance of the celestial family, and the whole press was disposed to lay "Humbug!" Mr. Greeley opened the columns of the Tribune to the exponents and defenders of the new revelation, and at least semi-endorsed the positions, that his paper was stigmatized other imitative things. "The Rapper's Journal," for many months, long prior to the appearance, of your journal, up to the period of Mr. Greeley's World's Fair, at London. He had, in the meantime, not been assiduous in looking, or preterit into the rappings, etc., and had invited member family to his house, and had satisfactory communications from deceased members of his own family. From his own experience and views were recorded, and in files of the Tribune, when I say that, up to the departure for Europe, the public was impressed with Greeley was a believer in the supra-mortal so-called Spirit Manifestations. When in London charged with believing in the Spirits, he addressed the Athenaeum, in which, while he confessed the things were done, he believed they were and mainly by clairvoyance and jugglery. This let me very unlike Horace Greeley. It was not mainly, nor in agreement with his prior work, had recorded no such opinion in the Tribune, have done being so convinced, in order to set and from this omission I think it fair to presume no such opinion. Hence, then, did he get ne which to honestly found his Athenaeum letter? to him intuitively, spurred by the politic conclusion, and a good time, to take the back track—tl Everett probably thought at Plymouth, the th used up and would not come to much, after all. this—I merely suggest the idea. Mr. Greeley's post at the Tribune, and not many weeks through his approval of communications on opinion and experience, he reconfirmed the many, myself among the number, that he regarded Manifestations worthy of consideration. Nay one has particularly urged that these manifestations investigated, it has been Horace Greeley. He so far as to suggest that we need a National that of France, at Paris, before whose savants tions and matters as this "inexplicable" Spirit be tried and solved. Again and again has he cry of "humbug" raised against it, and said, "Christians, many of your intelligent fellows b something in the rappings and revelations; do with the thing," without a why or wherefore; way to reason with men, but just look into it if it be a humbug, and if so, let us know how have not, perhaps, used Mr. Greeley's exact have got at the sense of his repeated appeal? Well, sir, I confess to you that, while I was, disposed to laugh with those who laughed, and with those who cried "humbug," I was, by the course and convictions, as I believed, of the Tribune, to think seriously of the Spirit phenomena! the Tribune was the almost direct and bringing me to investigate the matter, and I that Mr. Greeley and the Tribune have similar and directed thousands, for in no other quarter (journal) has so much evidence and encouragement. Of course I did not pin my faith to Mr. Greeley. I took his advice as to investigating, and hence felt when I read his London letter to the Tribune that letter did not so much surprise me as did the Tribune from Mr. Greeley, in the course of which that no more time should be given to the Spiritualism than to any other form of dissipation. I could draw from this advice was, was not worthy a sober, intelligent mind's at was an idle and useless dissipation. I was in because, in the same article Mr. Greeley says something is it. Besides, but a few days previous a paragraph in his own columns, endorsing today's nonsense, and averred that he had things moved without the application of hands. eation was an adjunct in all the movements with day. In this way, Messrs. Editors, Mr. Greeley blowing hot and cold with the same breath believes, the next day he doubts, and the next this masterly balancing over, and at times to subject, does not now in the least shake or affect with regard to Spiritualism. I was surprised of the matter, as well as his honesty; but I have looking to him as an exponent of the question.



